Income Guidelines for Determining Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) School Nutrition Programs

The income guidelines below are from the USDA's annual adjustments to the Income Guidelines (7CFR Part 245.3(a)). They are used in Connecticut to determine the eligibility of participants for free and reduced-price meals and milk in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs from **July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022**. These income guidelines must be used by all individuals who review applications, and should be distributed to all schools/sites for use by determining officials.

Before approving any free/reduced-price meal/milk applications, the determining official must review the USDA's publication, *Eligibility Manual for School Meals*; the *Application for Free and Reduced-price School Meals or Free Milk*, and accompanying instructions; and the *Parent/Guardian Letter to Households for Meals and Snacks* and *Parent/Guardian Letter to Households for Special Milk Program*. These documents are available in the "Documents/Forms" section of the Connecticut State Department of Education's Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Income Guidelines for Child Nutrition Programs: July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022*											
Free meals						Reduced-price meals					
Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice Per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income	Household Size	Annual gross income	Monthly gross income	Twice per month	Every two weeks gross income	Weekly gross income
1	16,744	1,396	698	644	322	**1**	23,828	1,986	993	917	459
2	22,646	1,888	944	871	436	**2**	32,227	2,686	1,343	1,240	620
3	28,548	2,379	1,190	1,098	549	**3**	40,626	3,386	1,693	1,563	782
4	34,450	2,871	1,436	1,325	663	**4**	49,025	4,086	2,043	1,886	943
5	40,352	3,363	1,682	1,552	776	**5**	57,424	4,786	2,393	2,209	1,105
6	46,254	3,855	1,928	1,779	890	**6**	65,823	5,486	2,743	2,532	1,266
7	52,156	4,347	2,174	2,006	1,003	**7**	74,222	6,186	3,093	2,855	1,428
8	58,058	4,839	2,420	2,233	1,117	**8**	82,621	6,886	3,443	3,178	1,589
Each additional family member	+ 5,902	+ 492	+ 246	+ 227	+ 114	**Each additional family member**	+ 8,399	+ 700	+ 350	+ 324	+ 162

* Income means income before deductions such as income taxes, Social Security taxes, insurance premiums, charitable contributions and bonds. It includes the following: 1) Monetary compensation for services, including wages, salary, commissions, or fees; 2) net income from non-farm self-employment; 3) net income from farm self-employment; 4) Social Security; 5) dividends or interest on savings or bonds or income from estates or trusts; 6) net rental income; 7) public assistance or welfare payments; 8) unemployment compensation; 9) government civilian employee or military retirement, or pensions or veterans' payments; 10) private pensions or annuities; 11) alimony or child support payments; 12) regular contributions from persons not living in the household; 13) net royalties; and 14) other cash income. Other cash income includes cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source including savings, investments, trust accounts, and other resources. "Income" as used here does not include any income or benefits received under any Federal programs, which are excluded from consideration as income by any legislative prohibition, for example, the value of benefits received under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Income Guidelines for the USDA's School Nutrition Programs

If a household has only one source of income, or if all sources of income are the same frequency, do **not** use conversion factors. Compare the income or sum of the incomes to the chart on page 1 for the appropriate frequency and household size to make the eligibility determination. Many households have different sources of income coming into the home at different frequencies, such as weekly or bi-weekly wages and monthly social security benefits. In these situations, convert all sources of income to an annual amount using the calculations below.

- **Weekly:** Multiply by 52
- **Every two weeks:** Multiply by 26
- **Twice per month:** Multiply by 24
- **Monthly:** Multiply by 12

In applying the guidelines, the school food authority/institution **must** compare the household's size and total household income to the income guidelines to determine eligibility for free or reduced-price meals. Children of parents or guardians who become unemployed may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals or for free milk during the period of unemployment.

For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Eligibility for Free and Reduced-Price Meals and Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage or contact the school nutrition programs staff in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/FreeRed/Income_Guidelines_SNP.pdf.

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